



DEVELOPING A PLAN TO PROTECT YOUR FAMILY

FROM NATURAL OR
MAN-MADE DISASTERS



www.homelandsecurity.ky.gov

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another and review what you will do in different situations.

- It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an **out-of-state contact** may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members.
- Be sure every member of your family **knows the phone number** and has **coins** or a **prepaid phone card** to call the emergency contact.
- **You may have trouble getting through**, or the telephone system maybe down altogether, **but be patient**.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Find out what kinds of disasters, both natural and man-made, are most likely to occur in your area and how you will be notified. Methods of getting your attention vary from community to community. One common method is to broadcast via **emergency radio** and **TV broadcasts**. You might hear a special siren, or get a telephone call, or emergency workers may go door-to-door.

EMERGENCY PLANS

You may also want to **inquire about emergency plans** at places where your family spends time: **work**, **daycare** and **school**. If no plans exist, consider volunteering to help create one. Talk to your neighbors about how you can work together in the event of an emergency. You will be better prepared to safely reunite your family and loved ones during an emergency if you think ahead and communicate with others in advance.

DECIDING TO STAY OR GO

Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the attack, the first important decision is whether you stay put or get away. You should understand and plan for both possibilities. Use common sense and available information, including what you are learning here, to determine if there is immediate danger.

In any emergency, local authorities may or may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However, you should monitor TV or radio news reports for information or official instructions as they become available. If you're specifically told to evacuate or seek medical treatment, do so immediately.

Staying Put

Whether you are at home, work or elsewhere, there may be situations when it's simply best to stay where you are and avoid any uncertainty outside.

There are other circumstances when staying put and creating a barrier between yourself and potentially contaminated air outside, a process known as “shelter-in-place,” is a matter of survival. Use available information to assess the situation. If you see large amounts of debris in the air or if local authorities say the air is badly contaminated, you may want to take this kind of action.





To “Shelter-in-Place:”

- Bring your family and pets **inside**.
- **Lock** doors, **close** windows, air vents and fireplace dampers.
- **Turn off** fans, air conditioning and forced air heating systems.
- Take your emergency supply kit unless you have reason to believe it has been contaminated.
- Go into an interior room with few windows, if possible.
- Seal all windows, doors and air vents with plastic sheeting and duct tape. Consider measuring and cutting the sheeting in advance to save time.
- Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to seal gaps so that you create a barrier between yourself and any contamination.
- Local authorities may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However, you should watch TV, listen to the radio or check the Internet often for official news and instructions as they become available.

Getting Away

There may be conditions under which you will decide to get away, or there may be situations when you are

ordered to leave. Plan how you will assemble your family and anticipate where you will go. Choose several destinations in different directions so you have options in an emergency.

Create an evacuation plan:

- **Plan places** where your family will meet, both within and outside of your immediate neighborhood.
- If you have a car, keep a **half tank of gas** in it at all times in case you need to evacuate.
- Become familiar with **alternate routes** and other means of transportation out of your area.
- If you **do not have a car**, plan how you will leave if you have to.
- **Take your emergency supply kit** unless you have reason to believe it has been contaminated.
- **Lock** the door behind you.
- Take your **pets** with you, but understand that only

service animals may be permitted in public shelters. Plan how you will care for your pets in an emergency.

If time allows:

- > Call or email the “out-of-state” contact in your family communications plan.
- > Tell them where you are going.
- > If there is damage to your home and you are instructed to do so, shut off



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water, gas and electricity before leaving.

- > Leave a note telling others when you left and where you are going.
- > Check with neighbors who may need a ride.

Learn how and when to turn off utilities:

If there is damage to your home or you are instructed to turn off your utilities:

- Locate the electric, gas and water shut-off valves.
- Keep necessary tools near gas and water shut-off valves.
- Teach family members how to turn off utilities.
- **If you turn the gas off, a professional must turn it back on. Do not attempt to do this yourself.**

Plan for your pets:

- **Pets should not be left behind**, but understand that only service animals may be permitted in public shelters. Plan how you will care for your pets in an emergency.
- **Store** extra food, water and supplies for your pet.



Neighborhoods and Apartment Buildings

A community working together during an emergency makes sense.

- **Talk to your neighbors** about how you can **work together**



during an emergency.

- **Find out if anyone has specialized equipment** like a power generator, or expertise such as medical knowledge, that might help in a crisis.
- Decide who will **check on elderly or disabled neighbors**.
- **Make back-up plans** for children in case you can't get home in an emergency.
- Sharing plans and **communicating in advance** is a good strategy.

Schools and Daycare

If you are a parent, or guardian of an elderly or disabled adult, make sure schools and daycare providers have emergency response plans.

- Ask how they will **communicate** with families during a crisis.
- Ask if they **store** adequate food, water and other basic supplies.
- Find out if they are **prepared** to “shelter-in-place” if need be, and where they plan to go if they must get away.

Employers

If you are an employer, make sure your workplace has a building evacuation plan that is regularly practiced.



- Take a critical look at your **heating, ventilation and air conditioning system** to determine if it is secure or if it could feasibly be upgraded to better filter potential contaminants, and be sure you know how to turn it off if needed.
- Think about what to do if your employees **can't go home**.
- Make sure you have appropriate **supplies** on hand.

IN A MOVING VEHICLE

- If there is an **explosion** or other factor that makes it difficult to control the vehicle, **pull over, stop the car and set the parking brake**.
- If the emergency could impact the physical stability of the roadway, **avoid overpasses, bridges, power lines, signs** and other hazards.
- If a power line falls on your car you are at risk of **electrical shock**, stay inside until a trained person removes the wire.
- **Listen** to the radio **for information and instructions as they become available**.

IN A HIGH-RISE BUILDING

- Note location of the closest **emergency exit**.
- Be sure you know **another way out** in case your first

choice is blocked.

- **Take cover** against a desk or table if things are falling.
- **Move away** from file cabinets, bookshelves or other things that might fall.
- **Face away** from windows and glass.
- **Move away** from exterior walls.
- Determine if you should stay put, “**shelter-in-place**” or get away.
- **Listen** for and follow **instructions**.
- Take your **emergency supply kit**, unless there is reason to believe it has been contaminated.
- **Do not use elevators**.
- Stay to the right **while going down stairwells to allow emergency workers to come up.** 🚒





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For more information about how to prepare your disaster supply kit and prepare for a specific terrorism threat or a natural or man-made disaster click on the related links:

www.homelandsecurity.ky.gov

www.redcross.org/preparedness/cdc_english/CDC.asp

www.ready.gov

www.protectyourfamily.ky.gov



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